



25th February 2010

British English edition

Issue Number 113

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The Dalai Lama and Barack Obama meet in the White House, in Washington DC

CHINA, AMERICA AND THE DALAI LAMA

A short meeting between Barack Obama, the American president, and the Dalai Lama, the Buddhist spiritual leader of Tibet, was held on 18th February. The talks took place in Washington DC, the capital of the USA. Although the meeting was shorter than an hour, many people believe it could have worldwide [repercussions](#).

Before the talks were held senior Chinese officials demanded the American president call the meeting off. If he didn't, they said, the important relationship between the USA and China could be badly affected. The USA has the world's largest economy, and China the third largest.

China claims the Dalai Lama is a separatist. It accuses him of wanting to meet world leaders so they will support his plan for Tibet, a region of China, to become an independent, or, separate country.

Many people who live in Tibet are Buddhists. Tibetan men often become monks and live in Buddhist [monasteries](#). Now most Tibetans living in Tibet and other parts of the world recognise the Dalai Lama as both their religious and political leader.

In 1950 the Chinese army marched into Tibet. It said people in senior positions in Tibet treated many ordinary people like slaves. China said it wanted to stop this. A few years later some Tibetans staged an uprising against the Chinese. These Tibetans claimed China was occupying their homeland. The uprising failed. Thousands of Tibetans were killed. Many, including the Dalai Lama, fled across the borders into northern India and Nepal.

China insists it has helped to improve the living standards of many people in Tibet. Since 1950 it has built many

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new buildings and roads. A modern railway – the highest in the world – connecting Beijing, the capital of China, and Lhasa, the largest city in Tibet, was opened in 2007.

But the Dalai Lama and his supporters say the Chinese are gradually destroying the ancient Tibetan culture. The Dalai Lama denies he wants independence for Tibet. He says his homeland should remain part of China, but must have more [autonomy](#). This, he believes, would be the best way to protect Tibet's Buddhist customs and traditional way of life.



Since leaving Tibet in 1959 the Dalai Lama has travelled to many countries from his home in northern India. He is now 74 years old. The Dalai Lama is admired by millions of people around the world for his commitment to non-violent protest. During his travels he has met more than 350 world leaders. These include several American presidents. Chinese officials often make complaints to the countries that give him permission to visit their leaders.

The Dalai Lama applied to meet President Obama in October 2009. His request was turned down. At the time President Obama was about to make his first visit to China. So many people think he refused to meet the Buddhist leader because he did not want to upset the Chinese government.

This time American officials said President Obama had agreed to meet the Dalai Lama as a spiritual rather than a political leader. The talks were held in the Map Room in the White House. When world leaders visit the home of the American president, meetings usually take place in the Oval Office. Time is often made available for photographs to be taken and questions asked by newspaper and television reporters. On this occasion only one picture was taken of the two men and no reporters were invited.

President Obama decided to go ahead with the meeting even though several other events have been causing difficulties between China and the USA. Recently the USA agreed to sell up-to-date military equipment, worth US\$6.4 billion (£4 billion), to Taiwan. Taiwan was formerly part of China, but became a separate country after a civil war ended in 1949. It now has its own elected leaders. The military equipment sale annoyed the Chinese government, as it believes Taiwan should be reunited with China.

There have also been disagreements about what is known as the trade imbalance between China and the USA. Currently, far more Chinese-made goods are bought in America than American-made items are sold in China. American companies say this is because China deliberately keeps the value of its currency low. This means Chinese-made items are usually much less expensive to buy than those produced in the USA.

At present the USA has to borrow large amounts of money. It does this by selling bonds, which are similar to IOUs. Many of these IOUs are bought by China. If China were to stop buying these bonds the USA

could find it difficult to borrow the amount of money it currently needs.

Hu Jin-tao, the president of China, is due to make an official visit to the USA in November. Some people think he may now decide to cancel this trip because of President Obama's meeting with the Dalai Lama.

After his meeting with President Obama the Dalai Lama said he had great admiration for America as a 'champion of democracy, freedom and human values'. ■

DO SIESTAS HELP?

An American scientist says his recent research proves having a siesta – a short sleep during the early afternoon – is good for you.

Siesta is a Spanish word. In some countries, especially where the weather is warm, such as Spain, it is quite common for people to take a siesta.



Siesta time

The scientist used 39 adult volunteers for his study. They were asked to carry out two learning tasks – one at midday and the second at six o'clock in the evening. The [participants](#) had to try to remember 100 pictures and the names attached to them.

Some of the volunteers were allowed to have a 90-minute nap after the midday task. The others stayed awake for the rest of the day. They

NewsCAST

UNDERWATER CAMERA RETURNED — A man who lost his camera while on holiday has had it returned – two years after he dropped it in the Atlantic Ocean. In 2008 he and his wife were sailing from the USA to Europe on a cruise ship. Their camera was accidentally dropped into the sea. At the beginning of February a camera was caught in the net of a vessel fishing off the west coast of Europe. The ship's captain realised it still worked. His story and photographs from the camera were shown on television. Friends of the couple recognised the man's wife in the pictures, and the camera was returned to its owners.

all did the next learning task in the evening. Those who had a siesta were much more successful at the second learning task than those who had stayed awake. What's more, the scientist said, the people who had a nap seemed to improve on their own performance as well. They did better in their second task than they did in their first one.

In the centre of the brain is a structure called the hippocampus. Scientists already know that when a person memorises facts, the information is stored in this part of the brain. Yet the information does not stay there for long. It is sent to an area called the prefrontal cortex where longer-term memories are stored.

The scientist who did the siesta experiment says he thinks the hippocampus is similar to an e-mail inbox. When it gets full it is unable to receive any more messages. Sleep, the scientist says, has the same effect as clearing out all the messages in an inbox and then putting them in the

correct folders. So until someone has some sleep the hippocampus will not be able to receive any more 'e-mail messages', or information to store and remember.

The scientist suggests the ideal length of a siesta is between 90 and 100 minutes. This allows the hippocampus to 'download' all its information. Those that wake up after a short nap in the middle of the day feeling grumpy and tired, says the scientist, may not have slept for long enough. However, he says, if a person sleeps too late in the afternoon, this could affect his or her night-time sleep.

Not all scientists agree a siesta is good for you. Some say getting a good night's sleep has exactly the same effect. ■

TRAIN CRASH IN BELGIUM

Two trains collided in Belgium on 15th February. The crash was the worst train accident in the country for over 50 years.

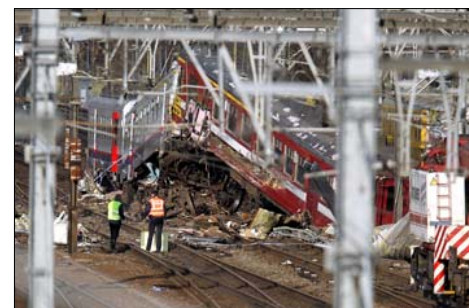
The accident happened about 14 kilometres (nine miles) from Brussels, the capital city. One train was an intercity express travelling towards Brussels. The other was a shorter local train. These types of trains are mainly used by people going to and from work, and are known as commuter trains.

In total the trains were carrying around 300 passengers. The accident happened early in the morning. It was snowing at the time. The two trains were on the same track and hit each other head-on. They crashed into each other with such force that some of the carriages were pushed up into the air and became locked together.

Rescue workers rushed to the site of the accident. It took many hours

to free those trapped in the wreckage. Officials later announced at least 18 people had been killed in the crash. They said over 160 had been injured, 55 of whom had to be kept in hospital. Rescue workers said more people might be found as they searched through the wrecked carriages, but they were sure none would have survived the crash.

The driver of the commuter train survived, but was badly injured. Some reports said when he realised the express train was on the same track, heading for his train, he tried to sound the alarm. He also put on the emergency brakes. Just before the trains collided he jumped from the driver's cab into the carriage behind him.



Train crash in Belgium

The accident caused a lot of damage to the track and to overhead power lines. All services that use the railway line had to be cancelled. This included the fast trains that run between Brussels and Paris, the capital of France. Eurostar trains that travel through the Channel tunnel between London, the capital of the UK, and Brussels were also suspended. The police said it would take at least six days to clear the wreckage and repair the damage the accident caused.

The official in charge of the railways in Belgium says an investigation will take place to find out what caused the accident. Some people think the crash happened because the commuter train failed to stop at a

red light. This train was not equipped with an automatic braking system. If it had been the train would have automatically stopped at all red lights. ■

FALKLAND ISLANDS ARGUMENT

The Falkland Islands are in the South Atlantic Ocean about 480 kilometres (300 miles) off the coast of Argentina. Since 1833 they have been controlled by the UK. The Argentine government has always insisted the Falkland Islands belong to Argentina. In Argentina, the islands are known as the Malvinas.



The argument about which country 'owns' the Falkland Islands also includes other small islands in the South Atlantic Ocean – South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. These are also controlled by the UK.

In 1982 Argentina and the UK fought a war over the Falkland Islands. Then only a few hundred people lived on the islands. Most were British, and made a living from sheep farming or fishing. In 1982 Argentina had a military government. It decided to send thousands of troops to occupy the islands.

The UK demanded that the Argentine troops leave. When their military government refused to order this, the UK sent navy ships and other troop-carrying ships to the South Atlantic. The fighting lasted for just over two months. The Argentine army occupying the

islands was defeated. About 900 soldiers were killed in the war. Thousands of Argentine soldiers were taken prisoner. All were released shortly after the fighting ended.

Since the war, the population of the Falkland Islands has increased. Some people now visit the islands for holidays. It has long been suspected that there is oil under the seabed in the area of ocean surrounding the islands.

The **prospect** of finding oil near the Falkland Islands has meant the argument over who 'owns' them has restarted. The country that controls the Falkland Islands will own any oil fields found under the nearby ocean. It will also control the fishing rights around the islands.

On 22nd February an oil rig from the UK began drilling for oil about 100 kilometres (62 miles) off the coast of the Falkland Islands. The government of Argentina was angry when it discovered that the UK had given several companies permission to look for oil in the area. Argentina claims it can prove drilling for oil near the Falklands is illegal under international law.



Cristina Fernández, president of Argentina

On 16th February, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, the president of Argentina, signed an order about ships going to the Falkland Islands. The order says any ships that sail through waters close to Argentina to get to the Falklands, South Georgia or the South Sandwich Islands will have to apply for a special permit to do so.

The Rio Group is an organisation of Caribbean and South and Central American countries. On 22nd and 23rd February the Rio Group met for its annual meeting, or summit, in Mexico. Felipe Calderón, the Mexican president, hosted the meeting. The Group discussed the Falkland Islands. All the leaders who attended the meeting agreed to support the Argentine president in her efforts to get control of the Falkland Islands.

Argentina says it will now take its complaint about the drilling for oil near the Malvinas to the United Nations (UN). ■

NIGER'S PRESIDENT OVERTHROWN

On 18th February soldiers attacked the presidential palace in Niamey, the capital of Niger. The soldiers captured Mamadou Tandja, the president of the country, and some of his ministers, who were attending a government meeting.

Later the same day the leaders of the soldiers that attacked the palace spoke on live television. They announced they had arrested the president and would now govern the country. They also declared they would close Niger's borders with other countries and that there would be a curfew in the country. This meant everyone had to stay indoors during the hours of darkness. Taking over the running of a country by force in this way is called a coup d'état, or coup (pronounced coo).

Niger is a country in North West Africa. Most of it forms part of the Sahara desert. Mr Tandja was first elected president in 1999. He was re-elected for another five-year term in 2004. Niger's constitution, or rules by which the country is governed, used to state that a president can serve

two terms in a row and must then step down.

Last year President Tandja announced he would hold a referendum – a vote in which all adults can take part. As part of the referendum, people would vote on whether a president could be allowed to stand for a longer term. The country's law court ruled that the referendum should not be allowed. President Tandja then disbanded the court and shut down Niger's parliament. This caused many protests and demonstrations. The President forced the referendum to take place. Those who opposed it refused to vote. This meant President Tandja got the result he wanted and stayed in power.



Former president of Niger, Mamadou Tandja

Niger was once a French colony. It became an independent country in 1960. France and other countries have criticised the coup. They say a change of government should only happen after a democratic election has been held. The Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), Ban Ki-moon, also says he disagrees with what the soldiers have done.

Niger is a member of the African Union (AU), an organisation of African countries. It has 53 members. On 19th February, the day after the coup, the AU said it would suspend Niger's membership.

Although many other countries and organisations have said they **disapprove** of what has happened in Niger, many people living in the country are pleased. Two days after

the soldiers took control thousands of people demonstrated in support of the military takeover. Many had been unhappy about Mr Tandja's plans to stay on as president. After the demonstrations the leaders of the coup said the country's borders would be reopened and there was no longer a need for a curfew.

The leaders of the military coup, also known as the junta, have called themselves the Supreme Council for the **Restoration** of Democracy. They say they want Niger to be ruled by a democratically-elected government. But they have not yet said when they will allow elections to be held. ▣

AUTISM CLUE?

Doctors at a university in the UK have made a new discovery that might help them to understand why people who have autism tend to avoid physical contact with others.

Autism is a condition that affects how the brain processes information. One symptom of autism is not **interacting** with other people. For example, a person with autism may not make very much eye contact with others or smile at them. People with autism have difficulty understanding the ways in which people relate to each other. This includes touching, or physical contact. Many people with autism are extremely sensitive to touch and sound. So they often avoid contact such as hugging with their parents, friends or families.

Most doctors agree that whether a person has autism has something to do with his or her genes. Yet at the moment doctors don't know very much about which genes are linked to autism, or what makes

them develop in the way they do. Now scientists believe they may have worked out part of the genetic puzzle of autism. They have discovered something new about a condition called Fragile-X syndrome and how it relates to physical contact.

Fragile-X syndrome is a mutation, or change, in one of our genes. The gene mutates very early on in a person's development – while still a **foetus** developing inside his or her mother. The mutation alters how synapses in the brain develop. The synapses pass signals from our brains to other parts of the body. Fragile-X syndrome is known as the leading cause of autism, because the synapses are what help the brain process information. Doctors know one of the symptoms of Fragile-X syndrome is avoiding physical contact.

The scientists studied some mice with Fragile-X syndrome. The study recorded the activity of the synapses in the brains of the mice as they developed. The scientists found that the parts of the brain that respond to touch developed later in mice with Fragile-X than in those that did not have it.

The scientists say being able to work out exactly when these developments and changes happen could be useful. It might mean doctors could **intervene** at that stage to give treatment.

Doctors say Fragile-X syndrome and autism have a lot of similar or overlapping features. The recent Fragile-X research might help them understand more about autism. But, they say many other things also contribute to the development of autism in people. The scientists admit that a lot more study is needed before real links between their study of Fragile-X syndrome in mice and the development of autism in people can be made. ▣

PLUTO'S 80TH ANNIVERSARY

by Dr Carol Ballard

18th February was the 80th anniversary of the discovery of Pluto. A young American astronomer called Clyde W Tombaugh was the first to notice it, in photographs of the night sky.

Until 1930, there were thought to be eight planets in our Solar System: Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune. In 1905, American astronomer Percy Lowell realised something was odd about the orbits of the two outer planets, Neptune and Uranus. He suspected another planet might be affecting their orbits. Mr Lowell spent ten years looking for this mystery planet, but failed to find it.

In 1930 Clyde Tombaugh used a more powerful telescope than Mr Lowell's to study the night sky. He discovered Pluto by taking photographs of the area where Mr Lowell had suggested the new planet should be. So Mr Lowell's prediction had been correct – there was a ninth planet!

At first it was just called Planet X. Over 1,000 people suggested a name for it. Eventually, a decision was made to call it 'Pluto'. The name was the idea of an 11-year old girl, called Venetia Burney, from Oxford, in the UK. Pluto is the name of the Roman god of the Underworld. It seemed to fit the planet, which was dark and cold. Also, its first two letters, 'PL', are Percy Lowell's initials.

Pluto's status as a planet only lasted for 76 years. In 2006, the International Astronomical Union (IAU) decided Pluto did not really fit the proper scientific description of a planet. They decided to class it as a 'dwarf planet' instead. Since then, other more distant objects, about the same size as Pluto, have been discovered. In 2008, the IAU announced that Pluto and these other objects should be classed as 'plutoids'.

Pluto measures about 2,280 kilometres (1,416 miles) across – less than one-fifth of the size of the Earth. Yet it has three moons. The first, Charon, is about 1,207 kilometres (750 miles) across

– more than half the size of Pluto. Charon was discovered in 1978. It was named after the character in Roman myths who takes people across the river by ferry at the entrance to the Underworld. Pluto's other two moons, Nix and Hydra, were both discovered in 2005. They are many times smaller than Charon.

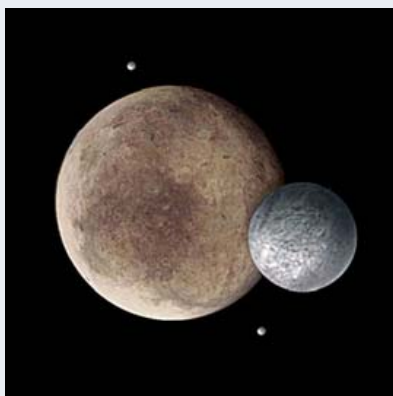
As Pluto is so far away from the Sun it takes about 5.5 hours for sunlight to reach it. This means Pluto is very, very cold. Scientists estimate the average temperature on Pluto's surface is about -233°C (-390°F).

In 1985, astronomers discovered that Pluto has an atmosphere. This probably contains nitrogen, methane and carbon dioxide. When Pluto is at its furthest from the Sun, the atmosphere freezes onto its surface. Then as it gets closer to the Sun the gasses evaporate and form an atmosphere again.

A planet's year is equal to the length of time it takes to orbit the Sun once. Pluto takes 248 Earth years to complete a single orbit of the Sun. The planets in our solar system orbit the Sun in a series of roughly flat ovals, or ellipses. But Pluto's orbit is tilted at a different angle from the others. For most of the time, Pluto is further away from the Sun than Neptune. But because its orbit is not regular, for a short time in every orbit it gets closer to the Sun than Neptune.

The length of time it takes a planet to spin on its axis once is called a day. Pluto does spin on its axis, but in the opposite direction from that in which the Earth spins. It spins slowly, taking six Earth days and nine Earth hours to spin round once – so one day on Pluto is longer than six days on Earth.

In 2005, NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) launched a spacecraft called New Horizons. This will fly past Pluto in 2015. It has cameras on board. They will send back the first clear images of Pluto and its moons, 85 years after it was first discovered.



Artist's impression of Pluto and its moons

COLLEGE SAILING SHIP SINKS

A ship called the *Concordia* sank in the South Atlantic Ocean, off the coast of Brazil, on 17th February. There were 64 people on board, many of them students.

The *Concordia* was a large sailing ship. In 1992 a college in Canada arranged for the ship to be built in Poland. The college ran lessons on the ship so students could continue with their studies while also learning how to sail. Students paid about C\$40,600 (£25,000) for a five-month voyage.

The ship left Canada last September. It had been to Europe and Africa and was expected to arrive in Montevideo, the capital of Uruguay, on 23rd February. The ship was then to visit some Atlantic Ocean islands and Southern Africa before returning to Canada.

There were 42 students on board. Most were from Canada. Others came from Australia, New Zealand, Mexico, the USA, Europe and the West Indies. All the students travelling on the *Concordia* were either in their first year of university or their last year of school.

The boat sank about 550 kilometres (340 miles) from the coast of Brazil. The crew and the students knew there would be some rough weather on that day, but it was not expected to cause any problems. The captain of the ship said it had been struck by a microburst. This is a sudden downward column of wind. When the strong wind hits the

water's surface it spreads out in all directions. Microbursts are sometimes described as being the opposite of a tornado.

The sudden downward wind caught in the ship's sails and pushed it over. Once it was on its side it quickly began to sink. Fortunately, many of the people were on deck at



Concordia

the time, and the ship had plenty of lifeboats. There was no time to send a radio message for help, but the ship had an emergency beacon. This was automatically released into the water when the ship sank. The signal from this beacon alerted the Brazilian navy.

A search plane was sent out. It eventually spotted the lifeboats and arranged for ships in the area to sail towards them. Everyone was rescued. The crew members and students spent about 40 hours in the lifeboats before they were rescued. Some said they were beginning to worry that the emergency beacon had not worked and nobody knew what had happened to them.

The Brazilian navy announced that everyone travelling on the *Concordia* had been picked up from the lifeboats. Stephen Harper, the prime minister of Canada, thanked the Brazilian navy and the other ships that helped with the rescue. ■

WAS IT THE MOSSAD?

On 18th February the chief of police in Dubai – part of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) – announced that

Meir Dagan should be arrested. Mr Dagan is the head of the Mossad, a secret Israeli organisation.

The Mossad's agents are known to have killed, or assassinated, people their organisation believes are a threat to Israel. Now as many as 26 secret agents are suspected of assassinating Mahmoud al-Mabhouh, in a hotel, in Dubai. He was a senior member of Hamas, a Palestinian organisation. Hamas currently governs the Gaza Strip. It also has groups of armed fighters. Recently Hamas and Israel have been at war.

Dubai's chief of police, Dahi Khalfan Tamim, says the agents arrived in Dubai around 19th January, using fake or **forged** passports. They started to follow Mr al-Mabhouh, who had flown to Dubai from Damascus, the capital of Syria, on the same day.

Some experts believe Mr al-Mabhouh was responsible for the murder of two soldiers from Israel. They also believe he travelled to Dubai to arrange to buy missiles and

NEWSCAST

NEWSPAPER DELIVERY 'BOY' — A man in the UK is hoping to set a world record – for being the world's oldest, and longest-serving, newspaper delivery person. Ted Ingram first started delivering newspapers in 1942 when he was 22 years old. He worked on a farm, but wanted to make some extra money. Mr Ingram now delivers about nine or ten newspapers a day to people in the village where he lives. Recently, he began using a car to travel around the village, after he had a hip operation. Mr Ingram hopes to still be doing his newspaper deliveries when he is 100 years old.

other weapons from Iran, to be used against Israel.

Mr Tamim showed pictures taken by closed-circuit television (CCTV) in the hotel in which Mr al-Mabhouh had booked a room. The pictures, he said, showed some of the Mossad agents following Mr al-Mabhouh.

The police chief believes several agents managed to get inside Mr al-Mabhouh's room, so when he returned they could [assassinate](#) him. Mr Tamim thinks they electrocuted him. They then covered his face with a pillow to stop him breathing. This was done to make it look as if Mr al-Mabhouh had died a natural death. His body was not discovered until the following day.

Soon after the murder had taken place, Mr Tamim says, the Mossad agents all flew out of Dubai to different places. He also claims mobile phone records show the agents were taking orders from somewhere in Austria.



Passport photographs of suspected agents from the Mossad released by the Dubai police

The police chief showed pictures of some of the agents, copied from their fake passports. These included passport photographs from the UK, Ireland, France, Germany and Australia. Some of the fake UK passports seem to have been copied from those of British people living in Israel.

Soon after Mr Tamim accused the Mossad of Mr al-Mabhouh's murder and announced its leader should be

arrested, the governments of the UK, Ireland, France, Germany and Australia complained. All were angry that their citizens' passports had been copied and used in this way.

The government of Israel and the Mossad have refused to say anything about what has happened. The Mossad has not admitted its agents carried out the murder, nor will it deny that they were involved. ■

BORN WITH FEAR OF SPIDERS?

Scientists working at two American universities have done some experiments with crickets – a type of insect – and spiders. The experiments seem to show crickets may have a way of warning their unborn young about the dangers of predators.

Wolf spiders catch and eat other insects. They hunt and kill their prey with a bite from their venomous fangs. Different types of wolf spider are found almost everywhere in the world. Often, the spiders are helpful to humans as they kill insects that can be harmful to crops or people.

One of the most common phobias in people is a fear of spiders, or arachnophobia. Some scientists believe this is really a type of protection. There are some spiders whose bites can be dangerous to humans. So, scientists think, humans might have evolved to fear spiders because it's important to stay away from venomous or dangerous things.

Some spiders prey on crickets. So scientists wondered if crickets should have evolved to fear spiders too. After all if a cricket can stay away from a spider, it avoids becoming the spider's next meal.

For their experiment the scientists placed some pregnant crickets

in a tank, called a terrarium, containing one wolf spider. The spider's fangs had been given a covering of wax. This meant it could [stalk](#) and hunt the crickets but not kill them. So the pregnant crickets in the tank were always under threat from the spider.



Wolf spider

After the crickets' eggs hatched, the scientists set up another tank. This time, they placed two sets of crickets in the terrarium with the wolf spider. Some were the 'babies' of the pregnant crickets, who had been in the spider terrarium. Others were from pregnant crickets that had not been under any threat from spider attacks. This time, the spider's fangs were not coated with wax, so it could kill the crickets when it caught them.

In the end, the spider caught and killed all the crickets. But the scientists noticed the crickets that avoided being caught for the longest were those whose pregnant mothers had been in the spider tank. These crickets were much more likely to look for, and stay in, hiding places than the others. The scientists also saw these crickets stayed very still when they were close to the spider's web. The scientists suspect the crickets knew that moving it could alert a nearby spider.

The experiments seemed to show pregnant mother crickets are able to 'warn' their young before they are born about the danger of spiders.

Yet what the scientists don't know at the moment is how crickets manage to do this. ■

FRISBEE INVENTOR DIES

Walter Frederick Morrison died at his home in the USA on 9th February. He was 90 years old. Mr Morrison was famous for inventing a toy called the Pluto Platter – better known as the Frisbee.

The Frisbee is an almost-flat disc that can be thrown with a spinning motion. If thrown correctly the disc can be made to glide smoothly through the air over long distances.

Mr Morrison is said to have come up with the idea for making his flying discs when he and his future wife began throwing a flat cake tin to one another on a beach. He decided to work out ways to make an object shaped like a cake tin glide further. He then began selling his flying discs from stalls at local fairs. Mr Morrison continued to work on improving the design of his invention. He managed to make the discs more **aerodynamic** so they would glide even further and could be thrown more accurately. He eventually named his final design the Pluto Platter.



Walter Frederick Morrison

Representatives from a toy company called Wham-O saw Mr Morrison's invention. They said they wanted to manufacture and sell the

NewsCAST

EXPENSIVE SPELLING MISTAKE — The boss of a mint – an organisation that makes a country's coins – in Chile has lost his job. A newspaper reported something unusual about the country's 50-peso coin. Many were stamped with the word 'Chile' spelt incorrectly. The word on the coin actually reads 'Chiie'. The coins were made in 2008, but it has taken a long time for anyone to notice the mistake. Many people checked the design before the coins were made, but nobody saw the error. Now people who find misspelt coins are keeping them in the hope they may become valuable to collectors in the future.



flying discs. Mr Morrison decided to sell his design, and the right to manufacture the discs, to the Wham-O Company. The company first began selling them in 1957.

Wham-O renamed the flying disc the Frisbee. An historian who wrote a book about the Frisbee with Mr Morrison says the Frisbee name probably came from a baking company. The Frisbie Pie Company sold its pies in flat tin plates similar in shape to the toy. The historian says some university students were heard using the name 'Frisbie' to describe the new toy. The company liked the name and decided to use it. Since then millions of Frisbees – and similar versions of Mr Morrison's flying disc – have been sold all around the world.

Throwing Frisbees is now a competitive sport as well as an outdoor pastime. In one team sport, players score points by passing a Frisbee up and down a field into zones at each end – similar to rugby or American

football. The opposing teams try to stop one another from passing the Frisbee into the end zones. At first the sport was called 'Ultimate Frisbee'. However, as the Frisbee name is a **trademark** of the Wham-O Company, the sport is now known as 'Ultimate'. ■

REDWOODS AND FOG

Environmentalists at an American university say changes in the weather could soon threaten a special ecosystem in the USA. They believe California redwood trees, which grow in the mountains along parts of the west coast of North America, could be damaged by a lack of fog.

California redwood trees, also known as sequoias and coast redwoods, are among the world's biggest living things. They are the world's tallest trees, reaching up to about 90 metres (295 feet) in height. The tallest recorded living redwood is 115.55 metres (379.1 feet) tall. The base of the trees can be as wide as eight metres (26 feet) in diameter. Redwoods are evergreens – trees that keep their leaves all year round. Some of the oldest redwood trees are over 2,000 years old.



Redwood forest

In the places where redwoods grow, there is quite a lot of rain. This keeps moisture in the air and causes fog to form. The trees grow well in

this kind of damp weather. Some of the largest and oldest redwoods grow in mountain valleys. This is because the fog tends to stay longer in the valleys than it does on higher ground.

The fog also helps the redwoods **conserve** water during the dry summer months. Redwoods can absorb the moisture into their leaves. Higher in the mountains, above what's known as the fog line, the trees are usually smaller than those in the fog-filled valleys.

The environmentalists' study says the amount of fog in the California redwood forest has decreased over the last 30 years. They studied temperature and cloud cover records since 1951. By doing this the researchers found a connection between the amount of cloud cover, or fog, and cooler temperatures.

Although cloud cover has only been recorded since 1951, temperature records have been kept for much longer. So the environmentalists used the records after 1951, with the temperature records before this date, to make estimates about the amount of cloud cover back to the early 1900s.

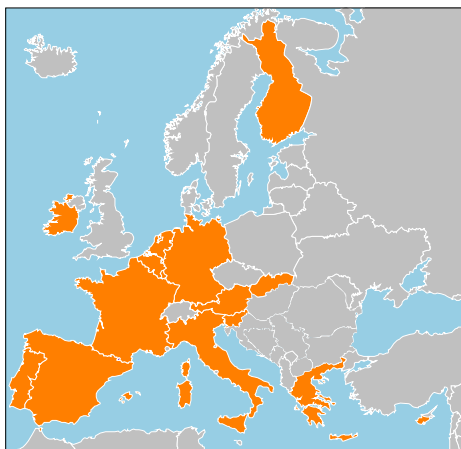
They discovered the area in which redwoods grow is now foggy for an average of three fewer hours per day than in 1901. This, the environmentalists say, has probably been caused by natural changes to the weather over the last hundred years. If the fog continues to 'shrink', they say, the areas in which redwoods grow may get smaller and smaller.

Much of the area in which California redwoods grow has been made into a national park. National parks are places that the American government has decided must be preserved. The redwood forests are also an important habitat for many native species of animals and birds.

Many people visit the Redwood National Park to walk among the huge trees and see wildlife. Sometimes visitors complain about the trees dripping on them as they walk along. National park officials explain that the drips come from fog, and that 'fog drip' is a good thing – because the giant trees need fog to survive. ■

GREECE AND THE EURO

Money experts have suggested Greece may be forced to change its currency. The country began using the euro as its currency in 2001. Now some think Greece may have to go back to using its old currency again – the drachma.



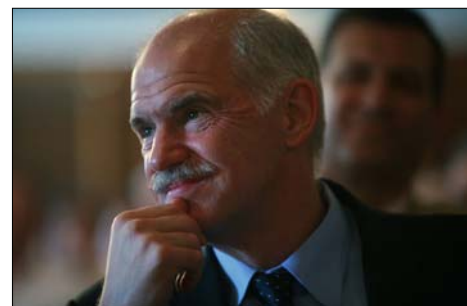
Countries in the Eurozone

Greece is a member of the Eurozone. This means it is one of 16 European Union (EU) member countries, out of a total of 27, that use the euro as their currency.

Each year a country's government writes a budget. This predicts how much money the government will raise from taxes. The budget also says if taxes are to go up or down, and on what the tax money will be spent. Many countries think they will need to spend more money than they predict they will receive

in taxes. They then have to borrow the extra. The amount they have to borrow is sometimes called the budget deficit.

The EU has rules that say a Eurozone country's budget deficit must not go above a certain level. Currently Greece's deficit is more than four times higher than the EU's allowed limit.



George Papandreou, prime minister of Greece

Countries and international organisations that have lent money to Greece are now charging the country more to borrow than other Eurozone members. They do this by charging a higher rate of interest. So, for example, Germany – another Eurozone member – can currently borrow money at a much lower interest rate than Greece.

Those lending the money claim Greece must pay more interest because there is a bigger risk it will not be able to pay the money it borrows back. The main reason they consider Greece to be 'a greater risk' is because it has such a high budget deficit.

One way for this 'risk' to be lowered would be for the other 26 EU members to agree to guarantee Greece's debts. Then if Greece could not pay back money it had borrowed, the other EU members would help to pay it. Providing money in this way is often called a 'bail-out'.

EU leaders have held meetings on what should be done about Greece's budget deficit. Very few

NewsCAST

BIG CAT GOES TO THE DENTIST — Dentists have performed an operation on an unusual patient – a leopard. The animal lives in a zoo in the USA. Staff working at the zoo noticed the six-year-old leopard had cracked one of its large canine teeth. Part of the tooth was missing. The zoo's vets decided instead of pulling the tooth out, they would fill in the hole. These large, sharp teeth are important for animals such as leopards as they use them to rip up the meat they eat. The dental treatment was one of the first operations done in a new veterinary centre at the zoo.

want to guarantee Greece's debts, in case the country can't pay them. If the other EU countries were to have to pay Greece's debts, it would be very unpopular with their people. Many argue it would be unfair on people in other EU countries such as France, Germany, the UK and Italy if some of the money they pay in taxes were used to bail-out Greece. These people think the Greek government should spend less and raise more money in taxes.

George Papandreou, the prime minister of Greece, has already announced plans to lower the budget deficit. Mr Papandreou insists Greece does not want a bail-out from the other EU members. Yet he says Greece should be able to borrow money at the same price, or rate of interest, as countries such as Germany.

His plans for lowering the budget deficit include stopping pay rises for government workers and putting extra taxes on petrol and alcohol. Yet experts do not think this will

be enough. And many people in Greece are unhappy. On 24th February hundreds of thousands of Greek workers went on strike. They were protesting about their prime minister's plans for reducing the budget deficit.

Some experts think Greece might have to leave the Eurozone if it cannot reduce its deficit and other EU members decide not to guarantee its debts. Yet others think this is unlikely. This, they say, is because other EU countries – such as Spain, Ireland and Portugal – also have high budget deficits. The EU will have to stop Greece from leaving the Eurozone, as if it doesn't these other countries may be forced out too. ■

LOWEST-COST MOBILE PHONE

A company has launched what it claims is the world's least expensive mobile phone. Called the Vodafone 150, the phone will be sold for less than US\$15 (£10).



Vodafone, the company that makes the new mobile phone, made its announcement on 15th February. The company is the world's largest mobile phone network operator. It has its headquarters in the UK. Vodafone operates in 31 different

countries and jointly runs networks in another 40.



Vodafone 250 and 150

Vodafone's announcement was made during an annual meeting of mobile telecommunication companies from all over the world. The meeting, known as the Mobile World Congress (MWC), took place in Barcelona, in Spain, between 13th and 18th February. Thousands of people attended. Mobile phone companies often use the MWC meeting to show off their new technologies and designs.

The new phone has basic phone call and text message features. It also has a calculator, currency converter, some games, a torch, and an alarm clock. A USB port has been included so it can be plugged into a computer.

Vodafone says its inexpensive mobile phone has been designed for use in developing countries. It will first be sold in India, Kenya, Mozambique, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Africa and Tanzania.

Vodafone says mobile phones are now used for much more than having phone conversations and sending text messages. For example, in Kenya many people now use phones for transferring money. Money transfers made by mobile phone, users say, are cheaper than using banks, which charge higher fees. The most popular mobile phone

money transfer service in Kenya is called M-PESA. Vodafone is a partner in this service. More than six million people transfer money by M-PESA in Kenya.

Vodafone also owns 40% of the biggest mobile phone network in Kenya. The company plans to extend its operation in Kenya so more areas of other nearby countries have access to its mobile network. Some experts therefore believe Vodafone has only decided to start making inexpensive phones so more people will have to use its network. Yet the company says the main reason why people living in developing countries cannot use mobile phones is the high cost of handsets, and not the cost of the calls. Its new phone, the company says, will help to solve this problem.

A second, more expensive model of the phone, called the Vodafone

250, will cost around US\$25 (£16). This model has a bigger screen, which has a colour display, and a radio that can be listened to with a headset. ■

SOLAR PROBE LAUNCHED

A new satellite designed to study the Sun was launched on 11th February. The satellite, or probe, is called the Solar Dynamics Observatory (SDO). It was launched from the USA. The satellite was sent into space on top of a NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) rocket, called an Atlas V.

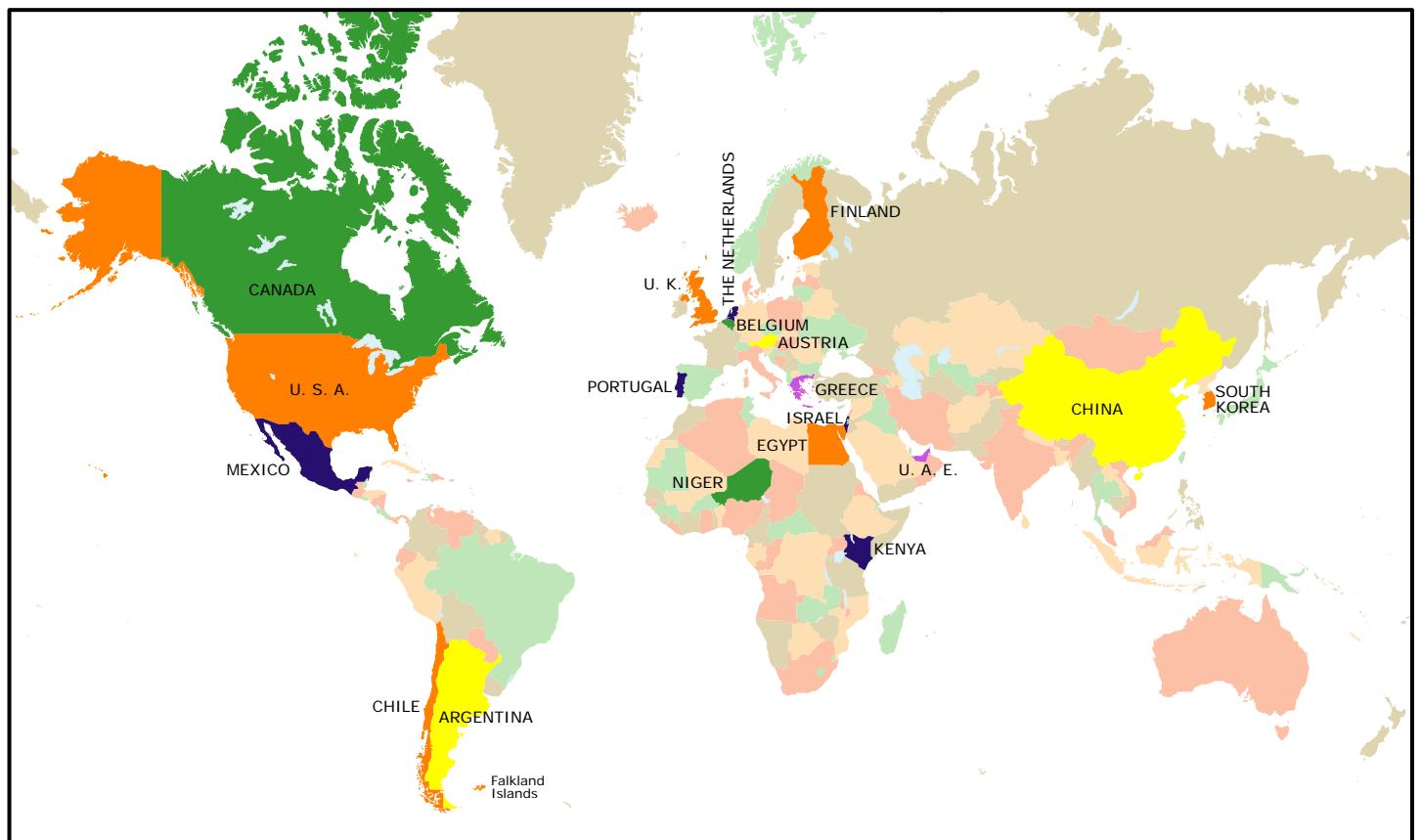
Scientists at NASA say the SDO is carrying the most technologically-advanced instruments ever made for studying the Sun. The probe has four telescopes. These will be used to take close-up pictures of the

Sun's surface. Other instruments will make recordings of the magnetic fields in the Sun's atmosphere and of what happens at its surface.



Atlas V rocket launch

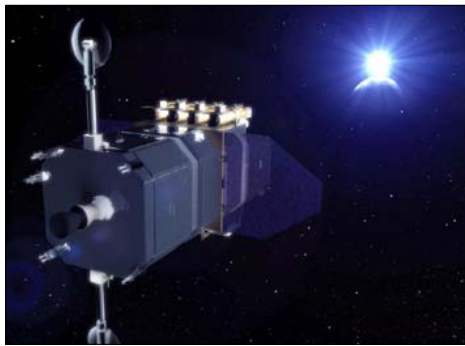
The Sun is a huge star around which the Earth, and the other planets in our solar system, orbit. Without its light and heat living things would not be able to survive on the Earth. But many events that take place both inside the Sun and on its



This map shows countries to which news stories refer in this issue. Visit www.newsademic.com for more detailed world maps.

surface are not yet fully understood by scientists.

These events include solar flares, solar winds, and coronal mass ejections (CMEs). Solar flares are large explosions that erupt from the surface into the Sun's atmosphere. They release huge amounts of energy and have the force of millions of atomic bombs. Some of this energy, a type of radiation, can be dangerous to astronauts in space. Solar winds release long streams of magnetically-charged particles. And CMEs can erupt billions of tonnes of material from the Sun into space.



Artist's impression of the SDO

Together solar flares, solar winds and CMEs are known as 'space weather'. This can affect aircraft, navigation systems, and satellite and radio communications. Space weather can even disrupt electricity supplied to people's homes.

Information recorded by the SDO will be used to try to better understand the events that cause this space weather. NASA says it wants to be able to predict more accurately when the events will occur. NASA believes it will be able to use this new knowledge to protect astronauts and certain types of technology on the Earth.

The SDO will take pictures and recordings of the Sun's surface every ten seconds. These will be transmitted to a specially-built receiving station on the Earth. All this

information will then be decoded and studied. NASA says the SDO will transmit about 1.5 terabytes of data every day. NASA even plans to make some of the data and photographs available via an iPhone free application, called 3D Sun.

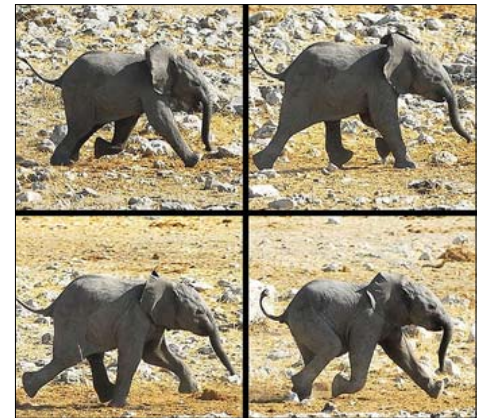
The SDO is expected to continue to send information on the Sun back to the Earth for the next five to ten years. ■

ELEPHANTS ON THE RUN?

Scientists at a university in Belgium have discovered that elephants have an unusual way of moving faster. Instead of running, elephants are able to move quickly by both walking and running at the same time.

The scientists made their discovery by building a specially designed platform over which elephants could move at different speeds. The platform was made up of what are known as force plates. These large

plates are sensitive to pressure. They can measure the downward force of something – such as a foot – when it lands on them. The scientists used these force recordings to work out what was happening to the centre of mass of the elephants as they moved across the plates.



Elephant in motion

Our centre of mass, also called our centre of gravity, is the central point over which our weight is distributed. Where our centre of mass is depends on how we are shaped. A tall person's centre of mass is higher than that of a shorter person. An animal such as a crocodile has a low centre of mass, because it is flat and low to the ground.

When a mammal runs, there is a moment when it is in the air with no feet touching the ground. This gives a running pace, or gait, a bouncy feel. The animal's centre of mass goes up and down with its gait. When an animal is walking, its centre of mass tends to move from side to side, but not up and down.

As part of the experiment, elephants were ridden by their trainers – known as mahouts – at different speeds over the plates. Over 30 elephants were measured in this way. The scientists then used the plate recordings to find out how the elephants' centres of mass moved.

NEWSCAST

SHOE THIEF CAUGHT — Police in South Korea have recently arrested a 59-year-old man for stealing shoes. In South Korea people remove their shoes at funerals as a sign of respect. Some people attending funerals found their new, expensive shoes had been swapped for old pairs. The police found around 1,200 pairs of shoes in the man's home. He had pretended to be invited to funerals and then stolen the shoes. The police say he planned to sell them in his second-hand shoe shop. Now the police have displayed hundreds of pairs of shoes, asking people who lost their shoes at funerals to reclaim them.

Their experiments showed that when the elephants ran, their centres of mass still moved up and down very little. Instead they continued to move from side to side. When elephants' centres of mass did move up and down, it was only during half of their 'running' stride. The scientists studied film of the elephants' movements very closely. They observed it was only the elephants' front legs that actually 'ran', or trotted. Their back legs continued to walk, but at a fast pace.

The scientists suspect this 'running and walking' method helps elephants use energy efficiently when they need to move quickly. The scientists calculated elephants use much less energy than humans do when they run. ■

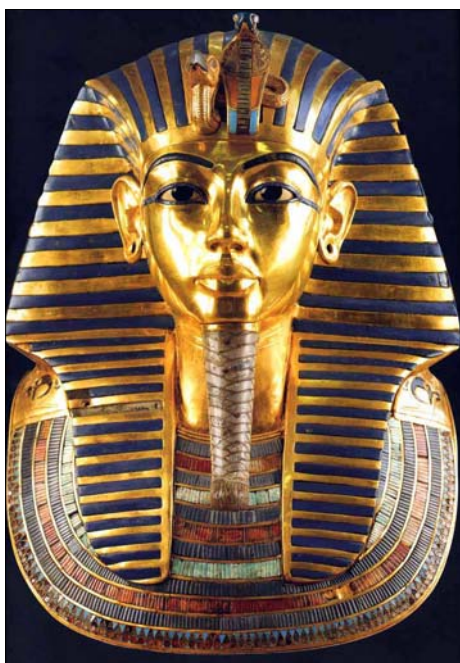
KING TUT'S SECRETS REVEALED

On 17th February Egyptologists announced several new discoveries about one of history's most famous Egyptian kings, Tutankhamun. New studies, including tests on the young king's DNA, have shown how he died, and information about other members of his family.

Tutankhamun became king, or pharaoh, of Egypt when he was only about eight years old. He died at the age of 19 in 1324BC. Although Tutankhamun – often called King Tut – was not one of Egypt's most powerful or long-lived pharaohs, he is probably its best-known. This is mainly because his tomb was so well-preserved when it was discovered in 1922. Tutankhamun's [sarcophagus](#) was opened to reveal a mask made of gold. This mask has now become a symbol of ancient Egypt.

Some mystery has always surrounded Tutankhamun's death. Three-dimensional scans taken of

his mummy revealed a hole in the back of his skull. Some historians believe this is evidence that he was murdered. But Egyptologists say the new tests show King Tut's death may have been due to malaria. This is an infectious disease carried by mosquitoes. Malaria can now be treated with medication. But left untreated, the disease can cause bad headaches and fevers, damage a person's liver and kidneys, and even lead to death.



Tutankhamun's burial mask

The tests show that Tutankhamun was a sickly young man. He may have had to walk using a cane or stick. This may explain why more than 120 walking sticks were found in his tomb. In 2007 Egyptologists studying King Tut's body found that he had a broken left leg. They now think Tutankhamun was probably already ill with malaria when he fell and broke his leg. He died soon afterwards, possibly because he was already weakened by the illness.

Embalmers, Egyptologists now say, probably made the hole in Tutankhamun's skull. Embalmers are people who treat a dead body to

preserve it. In Ancient Egypt a body was embalmed so it could be mummified. To do this the embalmers removed all the organs from inside the body – including the brain.

DNA tests were also done on 16 other mummies found close to where Tutankhamun was discovered. These have revealed some of their identities. The DNA tests confirmed King Tut was the son of a pharaoh called Ahkenaten, and that his mother may have been Ahkenaten's sister. In ancient Egypt it was not unusual for brothers and sisters in royal families to be married to each other. Another mummy was identified as King Tut's grandmother, Queen Tiye. The remains of two [stillborn](#) children found in his tomb were shown to be Tutankhamun's daughters. ■

BALTIC SEA MEETING

On 10th February a special meeting was held in Helsinki, the capital of Finland. The meeting, or summit, was arranged by an organisation called the Baltic Sea Action Group (BSAG). About 1,500 people attended.



The Baltic Sea is quite shallow. It is the largest area of brackish water in the world. Brackish water has more salt in it than fresh water, but less salt than seawater.

The Baltic is a sea that is mostly enclosed by land. Because of this it

has become very polluted. The pollutants include oil spills and toxic, or poisonous, waste. Some **munitions** left over from the Second World War (1939 – 1945) were dumped into the sea. There are also around 100,000 shipwrecks. The Baltic Sea has been described as the most polluted sea in the world.

The BSAG does not take sides in politics. It was set up to try to get countries and companies that have a connection with the Baltic Sea to work together to solve the pollution problems.



BSAG photograph

Leaders and senior politicians from nine countries that have a Baltic Sea coastline attended the meeting. Other countries that have a connection with the Baltic, such as Norway and Belarus, were also invited.

The Russian prime minister, Vladimir Putin, attended and spoke at the meeting. He explained Russia will soon begin to clean up its areas of the Baltic Sea. These include the Gulf of Finland, close to St Petersburg, Russia's second largest city, and the area of sea off the coast of the Russian **enclave** of Kaliningrad.

Mr Putin also talked about a gas pipeline under the Baltic Sea that is due to be completed in 2012. It is called Nord Stream. When it is finished, gas from Arctic areas of Russia will be pumped through it for use in German factories and houses.

Many people and environmental organisations are worried Nord

Stream will pollute the Baltic Sea even more. Most suspect the main reason the Russian prime minister attended the meeting was to **reassure** other countries and environmental groups that the pipeline would not harm the Baltic. The German leader, Chancellor Angela Merkel, did not go to the meeting.

Tarja Halonen and Matti Vanhanen, the president and prime minister of Finland, hosted the summit. Both said they believed it had been a success. ■

THE NETHERLANDS' PRIME MINISTER RESIGNS

On 22nd February the prime minister of The Netherlands, Jan Peter Balkenende, offered to resign. His sudden decision followed an argument about his country's soldiers continuing to take part in the war in Afghanistan.

Prime Minister Balkenende is a member of the Christian Democrat Appeal Party (CDA). Since 2006 the

CDA has governed The Netherlands together with several other political parties. This is known as a coalition. The largest of the other parties in the coalition is the Dutch Labour Party, also called the PvdA.

The Netherlands is a member of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization). The country has had about 2,000 troops in Afghanistan since 2006. The Dutch soldiers are based in the province of Uruzgan, working with soldiers from Australia. They have been helping to build roads and to train the new Afghan police force. Dutch soldiers have also been involved in fierce fighting against the Taliban. Over the last four years 21 Dutch soldiers have been killed in Afghanistan.



Jan Peter Balkenende

NEWSCAST

SAVED BY BURNING MONEY — A German man spent six hours stuck on a chairlift in freezing temperatures in Austria. The snowboarder was travelling down a mountain on the chairlift when it was switched off for the day and stopped moving. He decided to burn things to try to get someone to notice him. First he set tissues and bits of paper on fire. Eventually, all he had left to burn was money. Fortunately, someone saw the flames and he was rescued. The chairlift company says the lift is only for going up the mountain, not coming down, so the man should not have been on it.

The soldiers from The Netherlands were supposed to leave Afghanistan in 2008. But the Dutch government agreed they would stay until August 2010 because other NATO member countries had promised to send more troops. Yet the war in Afghanistan is very unpopular in The Netherlands.

Last year the USA decided to send an extra 30,000 soldiers to Afghanistan. Barack Obama, the president of the USA, asked other NATO member countries to also send more troops. There are now around 100,000 foreign soldiers in Afghanistan, from over 35 different countries.

Prime Minister Balkenende wanted the 2,000 soldiers from The Netherlands to stay in Afghanistan after

August 2010. But his coalition partner, the PvdA, disagreed. After a meeting that lasted for 16 hours the leader of the PvdA said his party would leave the coalition. The prime minister's party cannot govern the country without support from the PvdA, so he had no choice but to offer to resign.

Now the Dutch soldiers will be ordered to leave Afghanistan in August. Most people expect them to be replaced by American soldiers. Some experts say other countries may now also want to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan. The Canadian government has already said its 2,800 soldiers will leave Afghanistan by the end of 2011.

On 23rd February Queen Beatrix said she had accepted Mr Balkenende's **resignation** and that a new election will be held on 9th June. She also said that Mr Balkenende would stay on as a caretaker prime minister until the election is held. ■

FLOODS STRIKE MADEIRA

A heavy rainstorm struck the island of Madeira on 20th February. The rains caused severe flooding and mudslides. Buildings and roads were badly damaged in towns on the south of the island, including the capital, Funchal. Officials believe the floods killed 43 people and injured over 120 others.

Madeira is an island off the west coast of North Africa. It was a Portuguese colony for over 500 years. In 1976 Portugal agreed that it could become independent. This meant the island was able to elect its own political leaders. But it still has many connections with Portugal.

The island is very popular with tourists. One reason for this is its warm and sunny climate. The average

rainfall in the area around Funchal for the month of February is about 88 millimetres (3.5 inches). But on the night of the rainstorm, as much as 165 millimetres (6.5 inches) of rain is estimated to have fallen on parts of the island.

The centre of the island is quite mountainous and the heavy rains caused **torrents** of water to flow down the hillsides. The fast-flowing water carried large rocks and huge amounts of mud with it. When sudden rushes of water happen in this way, it is often called 'flash flooding'.



The narrow riverbeds in the towns near the coast were too small for the sudden rush of water and mud. It flowed down streets and through shops and houses. Many of those who died were in cars that were washed away.

After the flooding stopped, rescue workers began searching through the worst-affected areas. In some streets, overturned cars were covered in mud. The rescue work was made harder as many bridges and roads had been washed away. Fallen trees blocked some roads, and many of the island's telephones were no longer working. Local radio stations broadcast messages asking all doctors and nurses to return to the hospitals in which they worked.

Soldiers joined in the rescue work. Some people who had lost their homes were allowed to move

into the buildings in which the soldiers live. Temporary shelters have been set up for other people made homeless. Bulldozers and large diggers were needed to move the mud and rocks from the streets.



Street in Funchal after the flash floods

Portugal sent a navy ship to the island, carrying medical teams and other supplies. Helicopters and two military planes were also sent, carrying Portuguese police officers, fire fighters and expert divers.

The prime minister of Portugal, José Sócrates, visited Madeira on 21st February. He said he was shocked by the amount of damage the flash floods caused.

Some people have suggested recent building work on the island has made the floods worse. This building work, they say, has covered large areas in concrete, making some of the river valleys even narrower. ■

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Editor: Amber Thody

Acknowledgements:

News story photographs by gettyimages
Graphic for book review courtesy of Scholastic

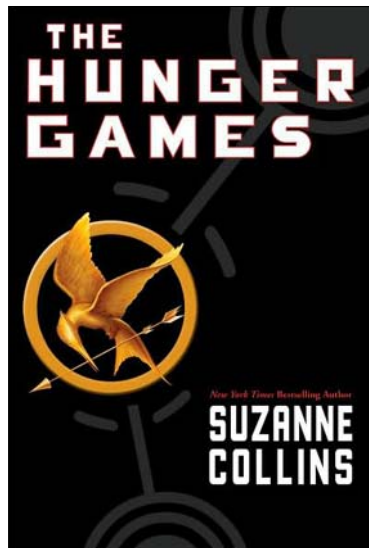
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B O O K R E V I E W

HAVE YOU READ ...?



Katniss Everdeen is a 16-year-old who lives with her younger sister and her mum. Katniss is responsible for taking care of them all since her father died in a coal mining accident years before. And one more thing: Katniss is about to volunteer to compete in the annual Hunger Games, a nationwide fully-televised competition!

Do you like to watch reality TV shows? The Hunger Games is a fan-

tastic and utterly terrifying reality show that takes place annually in the futuristic country of Panem. To decide who will participate each district, of which there are 12, holds a lottery called The Reaping. One boy and one girl are selected from each district. For some districts it's a great honour, and they train their children from birth for the competition. A lot rides on the result, because only one contestant can win. The winner gets a lot of money and fame, and can be sure his or her family will be well taken care of for life. So far it sounds great, right?

But to be victorious, the winner has to be the only person of the 24 contestants left alive at the end of the Hunger Games. This reality show requires the participants to enter a large arena and then fight each other – to the death.

The arena is huge, with cameras hidden everywhere so the audience can see every drop of blood shed. The competition can last for weeks, and the contestants must not only fight each other to survive. They are also up against the Capitol, which organises the Games. The Capitol is not above unfair tactics to boost audience ratings. It controls everything in the arena, introducing dangerous beasts, poisonous plants, freezing nights and other hazards to keep the competition interesting.

This possible future world had me riveted and I could not put this book down. I really enjoyed seeing how terrifyingly REAL all of this could be... a future world where people watch killing for their entertainment!

Because The Reaping is a lottery, anyone can be chosen, and it can be incredibly unfair. For example, one girl is only 12 years old and she has to survive against 18-year-olds who have trained all their lives for the Hunger Games. District 12, where Katniss lives, is the poorest of all Panem's districts. Almost everybody in 12 dreads The Reaping.

So why does Katniss *volunteer* to join The Hunger Games?

Read this terrifying story to find out.

The Hunger Games and *Catching Fire* by Suzanne Collins. Scholastic.

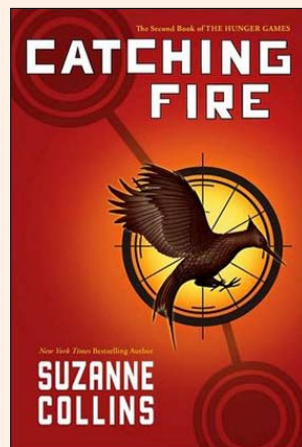
Reviewed by **Chris Tarn**

Newsademic subscriber Falk Spellerberg reviews *Catching Fire*, the sequel to *The Hunger Games*:

Katniss Everdeen is a pretty normal girl from District 12. The only thing that makes her special is the fact that nine months ago she and her pretend-boy-friend Peeta won the brutal Hunger Games the Capitol hosts every year. Now the winners' trip is imminent. Together Katniss and Peeta will travel around all 12 districts, standing in front of cheering crowds that secretly loathe them, but the Capitol forces all districts to celebrate the power it has over them.

Katniss is relieved she will never have to enter the Hunger Games ever again. But this year's Hunger Games are a 'quarter quell' – a game done every 25 years that always has a special rule. When the special rule is drawn, it is that every contestant must be drawn from the existing winners.

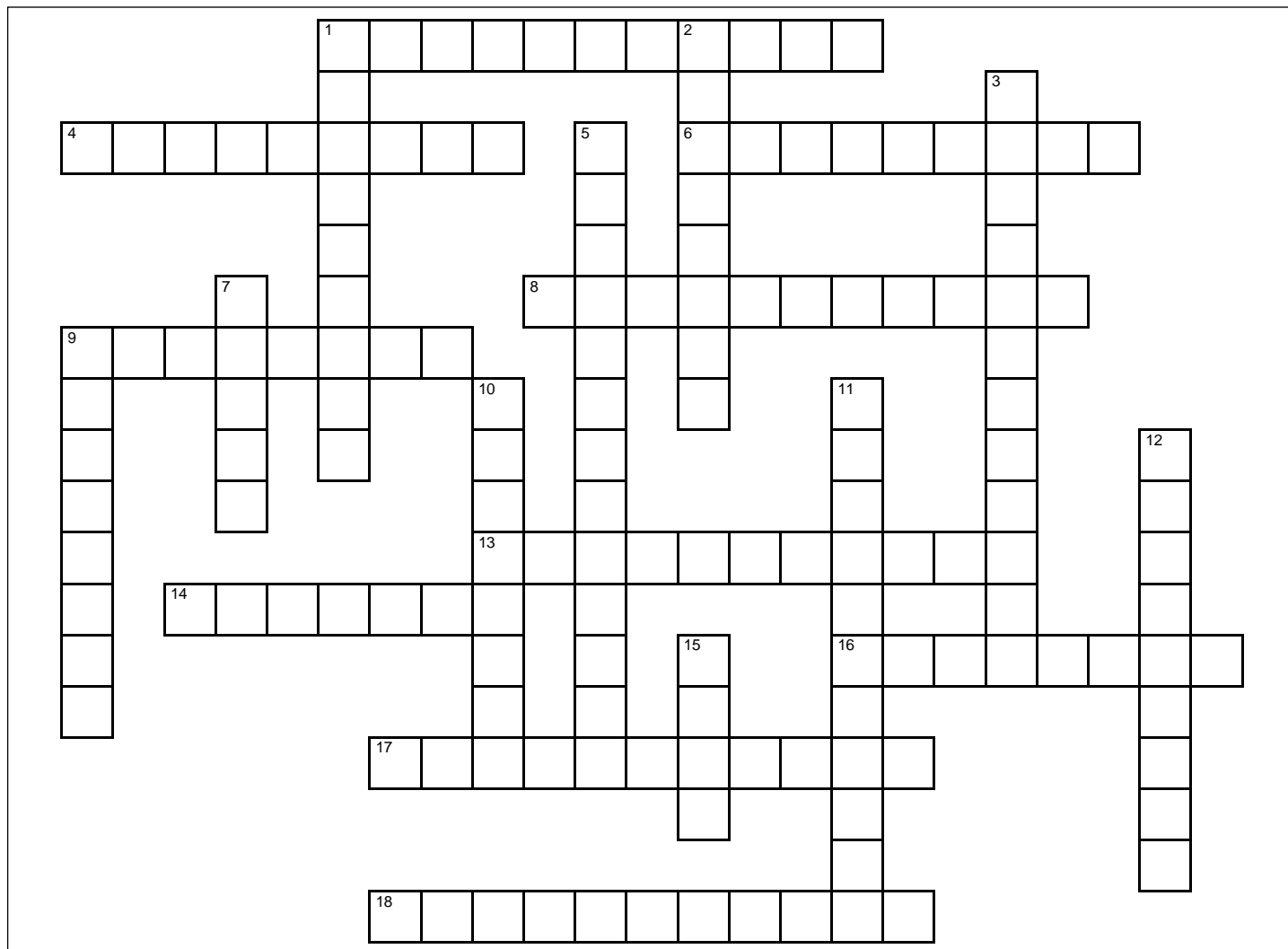
This book is the second of the Hunger Games Trilogy, set in the near future of America where the country is controlled by the Capitol. It is a very exciting novel and there is always a lot of tension. It is very brutal though, so I would recommend it for ages 12 and over.



GLOSSARY

PRIZE COMPETITION

INSTRUCTIONS: ① Complete the crossword. The answers are highlighted in orange in the news stories. There are 25 words highlighted and you need 20 of them to complete the crossword. ② Once you have solved the crossword find the 20 words in the word search on the next page ➡



Across

- 1 *Noun* A stone coffin
 4 *Noun (Plural)* Military weapons such as bombs and guns
 6 *Noun* A name, or symbol, put on an item to show it has been made by a particular company and that the item cannot legally be copied
 8 *Adjective* Designed with rounded edges to reduce wind resistance and increase energy efficiency
 9 *Noun* A raised level surface
 13 *Noun* Quitting a job or position
 14 *Noun* A part of a country surrounded by another country
 16 *Verb* To comfort someone or stop him or her from worrying
 17 *Verb* To kill an important person deliberately, especially for political reasons
 18 *Verb* Communicating with something, usually other people

Down

- 1 *Adjective* Describes a baby that is already dead when born
 2 *Noun* The right of a person, group or region to act without consulting another person or official body
 3 *Noun (Plural)* People who take part in an activity
 5 *Noun (Plural)* The effects that a decision or event has on other things
 7 *Verb* To follow or hunt an animal or other type of prey without being heard or seen
 9 *Noun* The possibility of future success
 10 *Noun (Plural)* Sudden large amounts of water or other liquids moving very quickly
 11 *Noun* Bringing something back to a former condition
 12 *Verb* To intentionally become involved in a difficult situation to stop it from getting worse
 15 *Noun* A particular way or pace of walking

GLOSSARY

PRIZE COMPETITION *CONTINUED*

S N O I S S U C R E P E R P O S R E
 T A T A A U T O N O M Y B L T E D T
 N O R C E N C L A V E U I N M E N A
 A T F C R O R T I A G N E M A T M N
 P T U E O W C I C O T R J J Y J M I
 I R C W D P I Q M E R U S F S U K S
 C A V Z Y L H N R O P L U Z P L I S
 I D S H N Q B A T H R S D O A F E A
 T E A T A A C Y G E M I O T N S G S
 R M V V M T I R S U R R S R V U V S
 A A M O I O E T C E S V O F P Q Y A
 P R H N C A O X C O D B E F K Q U C
 Z K G C S R E S Q J L L X N T W A Q
 W G K S A P T O G L G S Y U E A T H
 Z W U T K B G H I Q S N F I U J L Z
 H R I X E E G T M O Y B S G W T S P
 E O E F I Z S N O I T I N U M R Z B
 N O I T A N G I S E R V E W A C Q T

INSTRUCTIONS: ③ Find the crossword answers in the word search. Words can go vertically, horizontally, diagonally and back to front. ④ After solving the word search write down the unused letters, starting at the top left and reading from left to right, top to bottom to find the solution. **Hint** - The numbers of letters and words in the solution are shown under the word search.

COMPETITION PRIZES

Glossary Prize Winner

Hardback copy of *'The Hunger Games'*
by Suzanne Collins

Glossary Prize Runner up

10 free issues of Newsademic

Sudoku Prize Winner

10 free issues of Newsademic

ISSUE NUMBER 112 PRIZE WINNERS

Glossary Competition

Marcus Roberts, UK
Joni Lee, Canada

Sudoku Competition

Leah McPherson, UK

Competition solution (three words with a total of 22 letters)

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Go to www.newsademic.com log in and submit your solution by clicking on the "Enter competition" link within the Subscribers tools menu.

Deadline for receiving your entry is 10 pm on 11th March 2010 (GMT/UTC).

COMPETITION RULES:

1 Competition prizes are awarded on a per issue and not a per edition basis. 2 Only one entry per person per competition will be accepted. 3 You must obtain permission from your parent/guardian before entering if you are under 16 years of age. 4 Deadline for receiving entries is at 10 pm (GMT) on 11th March 2010. 5 The winners will be randomly selected from all correct entries received. 6 The winners will be contacted by E-mail. Newsademic's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. 7 Prizes must be taken as offered. There are no cash alternatives. 8 Newsademic does not accept any responsibility for lost or late entries due to the internet. Proof of submission is not proof of receipt. 9 Prizes won by those who have used a school subscription to enter will be awarded to the individual entrant and not to the school. 10 Competitions are not open to employees or contractors of Newsademic. 11 Newsademic reserves the right to cancel competitions at any stage, if in their opinion it is deemed necessary or if circumstances arise beyond their control. 12 These rules are governed by the laws of England and Wales. 13 When entering competitions entrants will be deemed to have accepted these rules and to agree to be bound by them.

SUDOKU COMPETITION

INSTRUCTIONS: ① Fill the boxes on each horizontal row with a number between 1 and 9. ② Fill the boxes on each vertical row with a number between 1 and 9. ③ Make sure that each number between 1 and 9 also appears in each highlighted 3 x 3 square box. ④ After solving the Sudoku puzzle write down the numbers from the tinted vertical column from top to bottom in the boxes below.

Competition Solution

□□□□□□□□

5								
		3					1	5
4			1			8		
3						7		
					2			9
2			4	6		5		1
				3				
	8	7		2	9			
					6	9	8	